

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY LIMA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5728

C O N F I D E N T I A L LIMA 5272

EO 11652: NGDS

TAGS: PGOV, PINT, PE

SUBJECT: CHANGES IN NAVY COMMAND

REF: (A) LIMA 5199 (B) LIMA 5132

1. OVER THE WEEKEND, NAVY INSURGENTS FOLLOWED UP ON THEIR SUCCESSFUL DEMAND FOR REMOVAL OF NAVY MINISTER FAURA BY SEEKING TO REMOVE OTHER VELASQUISTA OR UNPOPULAR OFFICERS IN KEY NAVY POSITION. THIS ISSUE NOW APPEARS RESOLVED THROUGH A COMPROMISE WITH VELASCO THAT FAVORS THE NAVY. REAR ADMIRAL JORGE RARODI GALLIANI WAS APPOINTED NAVY CHIEF OF STAFF JUNE 27 AND REAR ADMIRAL JUAN FRANCISCO EGUSQUIZA BABILONIA WAS NAMED FLEET COMMANDER SAME DAY.

2. PRESIDENT VELASCO REPORTEDLY WOULD HAVE PREFERRED TO RETAIN RADM FERNANDEZ DAVILA AS FLEET COMMANDER. FACED WITH NAVY INTRANSIGENCE, HE RELUCTANTLY ACCEDED TO REMOVAL OF FERNANDEZ DAVILA BUT BALKED AT REPLACING HIM WITH ADMIRAL CARCAJAL PAREJA, WHO WIDELY CONSIDERED TO BE KEY LEADER OF NAVY REVOLT.

EGUESQUIZA IS LITTLE KNOWN AND CONSIDERED SYMBOLIC OF COMPROMISE BETWEEN VELASCO AND THE NAVY.

3. ALTHOUGH THE NAVY CRISIS APPEARS TO BE OVER, CONSIDERABLE LATENT SENTIMENT FOR MORE SWEEPING CHANGES REMAINS. SOME OF SAME FEELING FOR THE REASSERTION OF INSTITUTIONAL INTEGRITY AGAINST DOMINATION BY PRESIDENT VELASCO AND THE ARMY EXISTS WITHIN THE AIR FORCE. CHANGES THERE WILL LIKELY AWAIT SCHEDULED RETIREMENT OF

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AIR MINISTER GILARDI IN AUGUST.

4. ALTHOUGH THE NAVY PUSH WAS CONFINED TO REGAINING CONTROL OF ITS OWN SERVICE, POLITICAL RAMIFICATIONS ARE MUCH BROADER. WHATEVER THE APPARENT COMPROMISE, PRESIDENT VELASCO HAS LOST IN THIS LIMITED TEST OF WILLS. SIX MONTHS AGO THE ISSUE WOULD HAVE BEEN RESOLVED DIFFERENTLY. THE OFFICIAL VIEW THAT MERE "INSTITUTIONAL READJUSTMENTS" TOOK PLACE WAS NOT A VELASCO VIEW, BUT DOES RELATE TO THE "HANDS OFF" APPROACH OF PRIME MINISTER MORALES BERMUDEZ.

5. THE NAVY ALSO IS OPEN MANIFESTATION OF BELOW SURFACE ENCOUNTER BETWEEN MODERATES AND LEFTISTS. MODERATES, CLEARLY ANTI-COMMUNISTS IN THIS CASE, WON THE BATTLE. IT IS LIMITED VICTORY. MORE IMPORTANT WOULD BE OPEN VERBAL BATTLES WITHIN THE ARMY WHICH MAY SOON BE FORTHCOMING. RECENT AND MUTUALLY CONTRADICTORY STATEMENTS BY MINISTER OF MINES FERNANDEZ MALDONADO AND MINISTER OF INTERIOR RICHTER POINT TO FUNDAMENTAL IDEOLOGICAL AND POLICY DIFFERENCES AMONG ARMY LEADERS. WE WILL PRESUMABLY HEAR MORE OF THIS IF VELASCO'S POWER CONTINUES TO DECLINE.
DEAN

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